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Message Text

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 4183

EXDIS

COUNTRY TEAM MESSAGE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, PINR, JM
SUBJECT: JAMAICA: POLICY OPTIONS IN A CONFRONTATION ATMOSPHERE

REF: (A) KINGSTON 4104, (B) KINGSTON 4042, (C) KINGSTON 3965

1. SUMMARY. PHILIP AGEE'S VISIT TO JAMAICA HAS BEEN ONLY ONE OF SERIES OF ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT IN RECENT MONTHS DESIGNED TO UTILIZE THE "DESTABILIZATION" THEME AS A POLITICAL TOOL. MANLEY NOW HAS A NUMBER OF OPTIONS OPEN TO HIM, RANGING FROM A CONTINUATION OF THE PRESENT SET OF TACTICS TO MORE PROVOCATIVE ACTION, INCLUDING THE EXPULSION OF EMBASSY PERSONNEL. WE RECOMMEND THAT WE TAKE ACTION NOW TO DEMONSTRATE OUR DISSATISFACTION WITH THE COURSE OF EVENTS. SPECIFICALLY WE SUGGEST RECALLING THE US AMBASSADOR "FOR CONSULTATIONS". WE ALSO FEEL WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO REDUCE SHARPLY OUR PERSONNEL OR PROGRAM PRESENCE IF MANLEY ESCALATES HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE U.S., INCLUDING BY DECLARING PNG US EMPLOYEES ON THE AGE/WIST. END SUMMARY.

2. THE PROBLEM - THE VISIT OF PHILIP AGEE TO JAMAICA CAN NOW BE SEEN AS PART OF A CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED CAMPAIGN ORGANIZED BY THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT TO UTILIZE THE DESTABILIZATION THEME THROUGH THE COMING ELECTION PERIOD. (SEE BACKGROUND IN REFTELS.) MANLEY'S DECISION TO USE THE U.S. AS SCAPEGOAT FOR JAMAICA'S
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ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL PROBLEMS HAS SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR

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OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS. IT IS INCUMBENT ON US TO REVIEW THE LIKELY COURSE OF DEVELOPMENTS AND THE ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS AVAILABLE TO US.

3. BACKGROUND - THE DATE FOR ELECTIONS HAS NOT YET BEEN ESTABLISHED BUT WILL LIKELY TAKE PLACE ANYTIME FROM MID-DECEMBER THROUGH FEBRUARY. DESPITE A SLIP IN POPULARITY SINCE THE LAST ELECTION, CURRENT ODDS WOULD FAVOR THE RETURN OF THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT FOR ANOTHER FIVE-YEAR TERM. GIVEN THE COMMANDING POSITION AFFORDED THE INCUMBENT PARTY BY THE STATE OF EMERGENCY, WE MUST OPERATE UNDER THE ASSUMPTION THAT THE PNP WILL BE AT AN ADVANTAGE IN THIS ELECTION. NOTHWITHSTANDING THIS ADVANTAGE, THE PNP HAS CAUSE TO BE CONCERNED OVER THE NARROWNESS OF ITS CURRENT MARGIN. THE JAMAICAN ECONOMY IS IN A SHAMBLES AND LIKELY TO GET WORSE BEFORE ELECTIONS. THE SIMULTANEOUS SLUMP IN SUGAR, ALUMINUM AND TOURISM HAS CREATED A CRITICAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE CRISIS. THERE ARE SERIOUS THREATS OF FOOD SHORTAGES AND THERE ARE PERSISTENT RUMORS OF IMPENDING DEVALUATION AND DRASTIC MEASURES TO REDUCE IMPORTS. THERE IS A PERVASIVE UNEASE AS DEMONSTRATED BY CAPTILA FLIGHT AND THE LENGTH OF VISA LINES. THE SITUATION BEGS FOR A SCAPEGOAT; IN THE CIA AND THE USG IT APPEARS MANLEY HAS FOUND A CREDIBLE CANDIDATE. HE AND HIS ASSOCIATES HAVE ACCUSED THE US OF "CONDUCTING PRESS CAMPAIGNS" TO HARM TOURISM, OF INSTITUTING A "CREDIT SQUEEZE", AND OF TAKING DIRECT ACTION TO DISCOURAGE INVESTMENT. ALLEGATIONS OF THIS TYPE HAVE BEEN ISSUED BY GOVERNMENT AND PNP SPOKESMEN SINCE EARLIER THIS YEAR AND THEY REACHED A CRESCENDO DURING AGEE'S CAREFULLY PLANNED VISIT. EVERY INDICATION IS THAT MANLEY INTENDS TO CONTINUE USE OF THE TACTIC THROUGH THE ELECTION PERIOD AND POSSIBLY BEYOND. THERE ARE A NUMBER OF LEVELS AT WHICH THIS COULD BE DONE.

A. MANLEY COULD CONTINUE TO ALLOW THE DESTABLILIZA-TION THEME TO CIRCULATE IN THE PRESS AND ALLOW LOWER ECHELON GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS OCCASIONALLY TO FAN THE FIRES.

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B. MANLEY, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH DUDLEY THOMPSON, COULD ASK US FOR CLARIFICATIONS AND EXPLANATIONS OF THE AGEE LIST OF ALLEGED CIA AGENTS WITH A VIEW TOWARD EMBARRASSING THE U.S. AND PUBLICLY DEMONSTRATING HIS VIGILANCE.

C. HE OR THOMPSON COULD PERSONALLLY EMBARK ON A MAJOR PUBLIC CAMPAIGN ON THE ISSUE.

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D. OPERATING FROM THE AGEE LIST OR ON HIS OWN
INFORMATION, MANLEY COULD, ON A WHOLESALE BASIS OR
SELECTIVELY, PNG PERSONNEL FOR THEIR "CIA ACTIVITIES".

E. ALTERNATIVELY, MANLEY COULD POSSIBLY LOSE CONTROL
OF THE INITIATIVE AND RADICAL GROUPS WITHIN OR WITHOUT
HIS PARTYCOULD SEIZE THE ISSUE IN ORDER TO FORCE A
FURTHER DETERIORATION OF US/GOJ RELATIONS. A DEVELOP-
MENT OF THIS TYPE COULD LEAD TO VIOLENT ACTION DIRECTED
AT U.S. EMPLOYEES OR CITIZENS.

4. WE FEEL IT IS IMPROBABLE THAT MANLEY WOULD EITHER
REVERSE THE DESTABILIZATION CAMPAIGN OR TAKE SO DRASTIC
AN ACTION AS TO DECLARE PNG ALL THOSE WHO WERE ON THE
AGEE LIST.

5. WE CONSIDER IT LIKELY THAT MANLEY WILL CHOOSE A
MIX OF THE OPTIONS OUTLINED ABOVE. HE WOULD PROBABLY PREFER
TO STAY PERSONALLY OUT OF THE FRACAS AND TO RETAIN A "STATES-
MANLIKE" ROLE WHILE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING HIS FOLLOWERS TO PLAY
THE DESTABILIZATION THEME FOR ALL IT IS WORTH. BUT, IF HE
SHOULD BE FORCED TO INVOLVE HIMSELF, OR IF HE SHOULD
CHOOSE SO TO DO, MANLEY WILL PROBABLY BOTH "SEEK
CLARIFICATIONS" AND EVENTUALLY THROW ONE OF MORE OF
THE ALLEGED AGENTS OUT. THE PRESSURE TO PERFORM
SOME DEMONSTRABLE ACT WILL INCREASE IN DIRECT PROPORTION
TO HIS OWN DESIRE OR NEED TO KEEP THE ISSUE ALIVE.

6. AT THIS TIME, THERE IS NO WAY OF ASSESSING WHETHER
THE ISSUE WILL TRIGGER THE VIOLENT FRINGE OF JAMAICAN SOCIETY
AND POLITICS. THE DANGER IS, OF COURSE, EXACERBATED BY PUBLICITY
AND THE PERSONALIZATION OF THE DESTABILIZATION ISSUE.
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7. ANALYSIS - WE MUST ADDRESS TWO SEPARATE BUT RELATED
ISSUES:

A. WE MUST CONSIDER WHAT POLICY OPTIONS AND COURSES
OF ACTION WE WISH TO TAKE IN THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES.

B. WE MUST CONSIDER WHAT OUR REACTION WILL BE TO
ANY OF THE COURSES OF ACTION EMBARKED UPON BY MANLEY

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IN THE NEAR FUTURE.

8. WHATEVER ACTIONS WE TAKE IN RESPONSE TO THE
CURRENT OR ANTICIPATED SITUATIONS MUST BE TAKEN
WITH A COMPLETE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONSEQUENCES
WITHIN THE JAMAICA POLITICAL MILIEU.

A. WE MUST AVOID ACTIONS WHICH MAY DAMAGE OUR INTERESTS
IN JAMAICA BY FORECLOSING ANY POSSIBILITY OF MANLEY REVERSING
OR TEMPERING HIS CURRENT COURSE.

B. WE MUST AVOID ACTIONS WHICH WOULD DAMAGE OPPOS-
TION LEADER SEAGA'S ELECTION PROSPECTS OR FREEDOM OF
ACTION IN THE EVENT HE IS ELECTED.

C. WE MUST AVOID OVER-REACTING IN THE FACE OF
PROVOCATION OF RADICAL FRINGE GROUPS.

D. WHEN WE ACT WE SHOULD DO SO DECISIVELY AND
UNAMBIGUOUSLY WITH REACTIONS GEARED TO THE LEVEL AND
INTENSITY OF THE GOJ'S ACTIONS.

9. OPTIONS.

A. BUSINESS AS USUAL. TO CONTINUE IN A ROUTINE
POSTURE (EXCEPT FOR ACTION ON OPTION C BELOW) WOULD
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BE THE SIMPLEST AND MOST LOGICAL OPTION TO IMPLEMENT UNTIL EVENTS REQUIRE A CHANGE. JAMAICAN AND OTHER SCREAMS OF DESTABILIZATION HAVE BEEN HEARD FROM CUBA TO SRI LANKA AND THEY HAVE DEVELOPED A LIFE AND CREDIBILITY OF THEIR OWN. HOWEVER, THERE IS PROBABLY LITTLE THIS EMBASSY CAN DO TO COUNTER THEM AND THEY WILL PROBABLY EVENTUALLY DIE DOWN AFTER THE ELECTIONS.

B. THE HEART-TO-HEART TALK. THE AMBASSADOR COULD, UNDER INSTRUCTIONS, MEET WITH PM MANLEY TO AGAIN UNDERLINE, IN A "NO HOLDS BARRED" TALK, THE SERIOUSNESS WITH WHICH THE USG VIEWS PRESENT TRENDS IN U.S./JAMAICA RELATIONSHIPS. IT WOULD BE MADE CLEAR THAT; WE FIND GOJ INVOLVEMENT IN THE AGEE AFFAIR UNJUSTIFIABLE AND UNFRIENDLY, CONTINUANCE OF THE PRESENT CAMPAIGN WOULD INEVITABLE LEAD TOWARD MAJOR NEGATIVE POLICY CHANGES TOWARD JAMAICA, AND THAT THE USG IS UNWILLING TO ALLOW THE PHYSICAL SAFETY OF US PERSONNEL TO BE THREATENED AS A CONSEQUENCE OF IRRESPONSIBLE PNP AND GOJ BEHAVIOR.

C. RECALL FOR CONSULTATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR PRESENTLY PLANS TO TAKE APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS LEAVE AWAY FROM JAMAICA COMMENCING OCTOBER 5. HE COULD DEPART SEVERAL DAYS EARLIER AND GO DIRECTLY TO WASHINGTON "FOR CONSULTATIONS". HE WOULD BE ABSENT FROM JAMAICA FOR NEARLY A MONTH WITH LITTLE CHANGE IN EXISTING PLANS. THE VISIT COULD BE MADE KNOWN, BOTH HERE AND IN WASHINGTON AS A "RECALL FOR CONSULTATIONS" IN CONNECTION WITH A "REVIEW OF U.S./JAMAICA BILATERAL RELATIONS."

D. FACE-TO-FACE MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY. A MEETING WITH MANLEY COULD BE ARRANGED FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER OR ANOTHER HIGH-LEVEL U.S. OFFICIAL. IN THIS MEETING, U.S. VIEWS WOULD BE CLEARLY SET FORTH AND MANLEY WOULD BE PUT ON NOTICE THAT WE DO NOT INTEND TO TOLERATE FURTHER POSTURING AT OUR EXPENSE.

E. REDUCTION IN U.S. PRESENCE. THE FINAL
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OPTION WOULD BE TO PROCEED NOW WITH A MAJOR REDUCTION IN THE US PRESENCE IN JAMAICA, INCLUDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS, PENDING SOME INDICATION THAT THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT OR ITS SUCCESSOR WOULD BE WILLING TO REVERSE THE COURSE OF CURRENT TRENDS.

10. DISCUSSION. IT IS OUR JUDGMENT THAT THE "HEART-TO-

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HEART TALK" APPROACH WOULD FAIL TO SERVE OUR
OBJECTIVES. THE AMBASSADOR HAS MET WITH MANLEY SEVERAL
TIMES PREVIOUSLY ON THE ISSUE OF DESTABILIZATION AND
HAS FREQUENTLY MADE OUR CONCERN KNOWN. MANLEY DOES NOT
RESPOND TO THREATS, AND HE COULD TWIST ANY APPROACH
WHICH INCLUDED THREATS AGAINST US IN SOMEPUBLIC FASHION.
HE MIGHT ALSO ASSUME HE COULD RIDE OUT THREATS AND ANY
IMPLEMENTATION THEREOF, UNTIL AFTER THE NEW YEAR.

11. FOR THE SAME REASON, WE FEEL AN APPROACH BY THE
SECRETARY OR OTHER HIGH-RANKING SPOKESMAN WOULD SERVE
NO PURPOSE AT THIS TIME. MANLEY WOULD DO EVERYTHING
POSSIBLE TO USE SUCH A MEETING AS TANGIBLE DEMONSTRATION
OF HIS CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE US EVEN IN THE FACE
OF HIS OWN ALLEGATIONS OF DESTABILIZATION. HIS OWN REPORTED
ASSUMPTION THAT A NEW ADMINISTRATION WILL TAKE OVER IN
WASHINGTON AFTER THE U.S. ELECTION WOULD DISCOUNT THE
VALUE OF ANY SUCH MEETING.

12. THE "RECALL FOR CONSULTATIONS" OPTION COMBINED
WITH "BUSINESS AS USUAL", FOR THE TIME BEING, OFFERS THE
MOST ADVANTAGEOUS REACTION TO THE CURRENT SITUATION. IT COMMITS US
TO NOTHING WHILE STRENGTHENING THE HAND, NOT ONLY OF THE
OPPOSITION IN JAMAICA, BUT ALSO OF THE MODERATE WING
WITHIN THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT; I.E., ALL THOSE IN
JAMAICA CONCERNED ABOUT THE FUTURE COURSE OF THIS
COUNTRY'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE U.S. THE OPTION HAS
SOME INTRINSIC FLEXIBILITY SINCE WE CAN ADJUST AT WILL
THE "SIGNIICANCE" OF THE RECALL WITH ITS IMPLICATIONS OF POLICY
REVIEW.

13. FINALLY, THE CUTBACK OPTION SHOULD BE HELD IN
RESERVE FOR POSSIBLE USE IN THE EVENT MANLEY ADOPTS
ONE OF THE MORE EXTREME OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO HIM IN
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PRESSING THE DESTABILIZATION CAMPAIGN. WE ARE RELUCTANT
TO RECOMMEND THIS OPTION AT THIS TIME GIVEN MANLEY'S
TEMPERAMENT AND THE JAMAICAN CHARACTER. UNDER THE
PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES IT WOULD BE PERCEIVED HERE AS
A BULLYING TACTIC, AND MIGHT DRIVE MANLEY FASTER AND
FURTHER TO THE LEFT THAN WOULD OTHERWISE BE THE CASE,
WHILE ALSO WEAKENING THE POSITION OF OUR FRIENDS HERE.
IF, HOWEVER WE CONTINUE TO EXPERIENCE A DETERIORATION
IN OUR BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP AS A CONSEQUENCE OF
MANLEY'S RHETORIC AND ALLEGATIONS, EITHER PERSONALLY
DELIVERED OR BY PROXY, WE MAY INEVITABLE BE FORCED
INTO THIS ALTERNATIVE.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS:

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A. THAT THE AMBASSADOR BE RECALLED TO WASHINGTON FOR "CONSULTATIONS" IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO HIS FORTHCOMING PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM JAMAICA. KINGSTON 4156 HAS ALREADY PROPOSEDTIMING.

B. THAT WE NOT INITIATE ANY PROGRAM OR PERSONNEL REDUCTIONS UNLESS THE CURRENT SITUATION DETERIOTATES SIGNIFICANTLY AND THERE IS CLEAR EVIDENCE THAT THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT HAS EMBARKED ON ONE OF THE MORE HOSTILE ALTERNATIVES LISTED ABOVE, OR OF OTHER TANGIBLE THREATS TO STAFF SECURITY.

C. THAT, FOR CONTINGENCY PURPOSES, THE USG BEGIN CONSIDERATION OF AREAS IN WHICH US PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION MIGHT BE REDUCED IF CIRCUMSTANCES SO WARRANT.
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